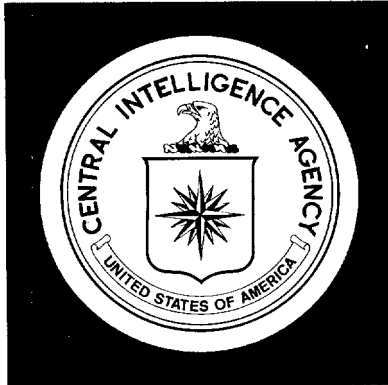


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Central Intelligence Bulletin

Top Secret

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7 November 1972



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Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023100090002-4

7 November 1972

Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

25X1

WEST GERMANY: Cabinet begins consideration of
general treaty. (Page 5)

25X1

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023100090002-4

Next 4 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023100090002-4

WEST GERMANY: Cabinet consideration of the draft version of the general political treaty negotiated with East Germany will begin today.

The East and West German negotiations, Michael Kohl and Egon Bahr, announced in a joint communiqué yesterday that they had concluded their negotiations, and that the two governments would review the treaty today. If both governments approve, the treaty could be initialed soon in Bonn. However, the West Germans have already stated they will not sign the treaty until after the parliamentary elections on 19 November.

The final version of the draft treaty is not yet available, but according to Bahr, Pankow is willing to include a reference that it disagrees with Bonn on the "national question"--after long rejecting any mention of this issue whatsoever. Pankow apparently is also willing to receive a West German "letter on national unity," but the East Germans doubtless will publicize their own views on this question. They may also have agreed to send a letter to Bonn in which they acknowledge that Allied rights and responsibilities are not affected by the inter-German treaty. Such a letter, in Bonn's view, would attest that the treaty leaves open the question of a final peace treaty for all Germany.

Bahr and other advocates of the treaty will be able to point to the East German "compromises" on major issues, the fact that the treaty will lead to practical improvements in relations between the two Germanies, and the Four Power declaration concluded on 5 November, as reasons the treaty should be accepted. To underline

25X6

7 Nov 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

5

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(their campaign theme that they keep the Social Democrats responsible, the Free Democratic ministers might hold off final approval until Bahr seeks still further cosmetic changes. There seems little chance, however, that they would force a rejection of the treaty.

The opposition parties will be offered their first official view of the treaty when the standing committee of the Bundestag and the party chairmen are briefed today. The cabinet decision is expected to be announced at a press conference this afternoon.

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7 Nov 72

Central Intelligence Bulletin

6

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25X1

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Next 11 Page(s) In Document Exempt

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023100090002-4

25X1

Top Secret

Approved For Release 2003/08/05 : CIA-RDP79T00975A023100090002-4



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